

# Boston, Massachusetts

## ASLA Board of Trustees

November 14–15, 2013 Annual Meeting  
**Indiana Trustee Report**

Meeting called to order by President Tom Tavella, FASLA. Meeting minutes from the 2013 Mid-Year Meeting in Washington, D.C. were approved by the Board. Throughout the course of the meeting, reports and presentation summaries were given to the board from:

- LAAP Report by Dave Walters, ASLA and Ron Leighton, Director LAAB
- CLARB Report by James Penrod, Dept. Executive Director of CLARB and Stephanie Landregan, President CLARB
- Ace Mentor Program Report by William Kuhl, FASLA and Robert Golde, ASLA
- CELA Report by Sean Michael, PhD, President
- CSLA Report by Peter Briggs, ASLA Director
- IFLA Report – Desiree Martinez, International ASLA
- Student Representative Report by Andrew Bernard, Student ASLA
- LAAB Report by Dave Walters, ASLA

Specific summaries of items that required Board action in some manner as well as the notation of that specific action on the presented issues are highlighted below.

### **1. Programming and Operations Report –**

*Presented by Nancy Sommerville, Executive Vice-President ASLA*

Highlights of the report were updates on Federal Advocacy, State Advocacy, membership, Public Awareness Campaign, & Advocacy, including:

- Federal advocacy efforts: As Congress considered Fiscal Year 2014 appropriations bills, ASLA weighed in on efforts to strip funding for the Transportation Alternatives Program, the Community Development Block Grants, and Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants in the Transportation Housing and Urban Development spending bill. ASLA also actively opposed efforts to eliminate funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Forest Legacy program, and the Urban and Community Forestry Program in the Interior and Environment spending bill.
- State Advocacy - defending against licensure challenges, especially in Michigan. Continued review of state priorities survey and planning for Advocacy Summits.
- Public Awareness Overview: Continued strong media coverage, 2013 Year of Public Service, Public awareness campaign, events continuing Health Benefits of Nature resource guide, Diversity Summit and creation of Landscape Architect's Guide to Boston.
- Registration for the annual meeting and EXPO continued to outpace the previous five years both in terms of number of attendees and revenue collected. By the end of the third quarter, more than 3,100 attendees had registered for the meeting and registration, ticket, and alumni reunion revenue collected totaled \$1,286,065 or 88 percent of the annual budget goal of \$1.375 million. This is already 20 percent over the total collected for the 2012 meeting.

- As of September 30, 2013, membership has increased slightly in the third quarter; an increase of 1.97 percent from year-end 2012.
- Membership Boot Camp webinars were held on July 24 and 25. Over 35 chapter leaders participated in both webinars, which were recorded and shared with the chapter membership chairs and presidents and posted on the Chapter Operations Workbook.
- ASLA engaged new legal counsel who began work with the Professional Practice Committee to revise and update the ASLA Standard Contracts and review the final draft of the next professional services agreement and construction administration guidelines prior to release for publication.
- Governance and legal issues related to the Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) were a significant focus during the third quarter, including attempts to resolve a dispute over ownership of the SITES trademarks with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Austin. Related work included development with U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) of a draft SITES-USGBC/GBCI Memorandum of Understanding and a SITES-GBCI licensing agreement, as well as discussions with GBCI on marketing/promotion plans for SITES v2 and open project certification.
- ASLA was awarded the "Certificate of Appreciation" by the District of Columbia for its contribution to the District's Sustainability DC Plan to make the city the healthiest, greenest, most livable city in the nation.
- The green roof continues to be popular with locals and visitors. Groups that visited in the third quarter included the Fred A. Smith Company, a property management firm, which was interested in installing green roofs on rental apartment houses in Washington, D.C.; Georgetown University Law School; Louisiana State University; Ball State University, and others. The green roof is still being promoted by Cultural Tourism D.C.
- On July 12-14, ASLA hosted the annual Advocacy Summit with representatives of over 30 chapters on hand to share information and learn best practices for advocacy planning. The sessions also focused on latest efforts to forestall deregulation of licensure.
- ASLA is working to support to the ASLA Potomac Chapter in its pursuit of licensure for landscape architects in the District of Columbia, which currently lacks any regulation. The D.C. Board of Architecture and Interior Design may vote on a licensure proposal as early as October, but no details have been released.
- Greenstreet RFQ anticipated to be released in Mid-November 2013 for the Chinatown Greensteet initiative.

**Board Action:** Review of the Programming & Operations Report was requested by the Board.

## **2. *FY Annual Operating Plan (AOP) –***

*Presented by Nancy Sommerville, Executive Vice-President ASLA and Mark Focht, FASLA President-elect*

The Annual Operating Plan (AOP) outlines ASLA programs, their objectives, and specific goals for the coming year. The AOP responds to the Board's evaluation and ranking of strategic objectives and programs. At the 2013 Mid-Year Meeting, the BOT evaluated and

ranked these objectives and goals and participated in a SWOT analysis for 2014. Specific highlights of the AOP include the development of a membership recruitment program and continued support of the coordinated public awareness campaign and building the diversity of the profession, building on the 2013 Diversity Awareness Forum. 2014 efforts include restoring staff in the Landscape Architecture Magazine position and the Government Affairs staff position that were reduced post-recession. Continued support of chapters' licensure advocacy efforts, including protecting landscape architecture practice and licensing boards from attack, through regular advocacy training webinars, chapter visits, the advocacy summit, the advocacy grant program, and new advocacy tools are also included in the AOP. A goal to achieve a 2 percent growth and a retention rate at or above 86 percent for full and associate members, grow student membership by 3 percent and increase retention rates for students to 60 percent and maintain a minimum of 85 percent accuracy in membership-wide email; review duplicate records; maintain a minimum of 90 percent of Full. Continue to develop the Chinatown Green Street Demonstration Project and advancement of the Sustainable Sites Initiative.

**Board Action:** Proposed Motion: Motion to approve FY 2014 Annual Operating Plan as presented. Board voted to approve Motion unanimously.

### 3. Finance & Budget –

*Presented by David Lycke, FASLA Vice President of Finance and Michael O'Brien, ASLA CFO*

An overview regarding the potential payment of the mortgage with a SWAP of from the long-term reserve for the ASLA Headquarters building was presented that was drafted by the Finance & Investment Committee. Future action by the board on this proposal is anticipated prior to the end of year. In addition, the three major topics covered under the Finance & Budget discussion included:

#### **Finance & Investments Report –**

- A significant portion of the Society's change in net assets each year (net income or loss) is derived from the annual meeting. ASLA follows the completed-show method of accounting, which requires it to defer both income- and expense-related items directly attributable to the annual meeting until its completion. The majority of our expenses, such as salaries, are recorded equally each month, so it is not uncommon for the change in net assets to be negative (net loss) until the meeting concludes in November.
- Membership revenue through September was approximately \$2.6 million. This amount is in line with the same period last year but falls short of the budget by \$157,000. Continuing on a positive trend, Membership has reported three consecutive quarters of slight revenue growth in 2013. Advertising revenue is on track to meet the budget targets at year-end based on current projections. When comparing Advertising revenue year over year, special consideration needs to be given to the timing of the "Awards" and the "Show" issues, the two largest revenue producers for the magazine. The current year included only the "Awards" issue through September, while last year included both issues. Additionally, ASLA is reporting positive comparisons to budgets in Education and Information & Professional Practice over by \$26,000, offset by below expectation in the Resource Development & Publishing \$46,000 (the Awards program was not as successful as in prior years). Overall, revenue falls short of the budget by \$273,000, or five percent.
- In the third quarter, the Finance and Investments Committee authorized an additional \$180,000 transfer to the long-term reserve. Contributions for the year total \$360,000 and

represent approximately 3 percent of the 2013 expenses (the yearly goal). The value of the long-term reserve is \$4.9 million and has an unrealized gain of approximately \$535,000 or 12 percent.

#### **FY 2014 – 2015 Operating Budgets –**

The 2014 draft budget reflects changes made to the 2014 planning budget presented to the Board during last year's annual meeting in Phoenix. Management's changes are discussed below:

- Revenue increases total \$32,000, with \$20,000 related to the Society's investments and \$12,000 associated with the LAAB.
- Creation of a three percent salary pool of \$120,000 for merit increases.
- A set-aside of \$18,000 to cover the eight percent increase in health insurance premiums.
- Addition of a legislative assistant position in Government Affairs, \$45,000. This position will focus on communication and research, allowing the more experienced staff additional time for coalition building, working with government agencies and members of Congress on critical ASLA issues.
- Addition of a writer/editor position for *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, \$45,000. This position will add to the magazine's capacity to develop editorial content, expand its blog presence and increase opportunities in other areas of social media, including producing a landscape architecture-focused newswire for members.
- In Membership, there is a \$10,000 decrease associated with last year's Membership boot camp offset by a \$6,000 increase for leadership visits to student chapters.
- Continuation of the ASLA "2013 Green Theme" to challenge the office to reduce paper and postage usage and minimize waste.

**Board Action:** Proposed Motion: Motion to approve the 2014 Operating Budget. Board voted to approve Motion unanimously.

#### **2014-15 Capital Expense Budget:**

- **2013 Activity:** Upgraded iMIS system (membership database and Outlook interface; replaced hot water heater on third floor, LACES upgrade and website development
- **2014 Activity:** Building Master Plan (planned renovations include carpet replacement, upgrading office entrance and storage/library facilities., ASLA Headquarters Site Sustainability Master Plan; Business Continuity Plan
- **2015 Plan –** Computer hardware upgrades and website development.

**Board Action:** Motion to approve 2014-15 capital expenditure plan. Board voted to approve Motion unanimously.

#### **4. Sustainable Sites Initiative Progress Report –**

*Presented by Annette Wilkus, ASLA, Vice-President Professional Practice & Liz Guthrie, Manger Professional Practice & SITES*

- SITES Reference Guide and Rating System. Work has continued on the development of the *SITES v2 Reference Guide and Rating System*. After an extensive weighting process, the SITES Technical Committee members finalized assignment of point values to credits in the updated system. SITES partner staff reviewed draft layout options of updated credit templates and book cover designs.
- The SITES Executive Committee met at U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) headquarters on September 12 with staff from the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) to discuss marketing and promotion for project certification for SITES v2. Pilot Project Updates. On August 13, SITES announced that eight additional pilot projects achieved certification. To date, 23 projects have been certified under the 2009 *Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks*. An additional 80 pilot projects are continuing to work toward certification.

- Education, Presentations and Training. SITES will present two workshops at the ASLA Annual Meeting in Boston, on Friday November 15—Understanding and Applying the SITES v2 Rating System and Applying the SITES v2 Rating System to Your Project. The sessions will focus on practical tools for applying the latest SITES rating system to projects. The workshops will be led by SITES staff and technical experts who helped create the rating system.
- Forty-one renewing ASLA members have successfully completed the online SITES Distance Learning Session offered to renewing members as part of the current membership benefit.

**Board Action:** No action was requested by the Board.

## 5. Public Policy Statement –

*Presented by Julia Lent, Director, Government Affairs & Chad Danos, FASLA, Vice President of Government Affairs*

- The Policy Committee is proposing a policy on Human Health and Well-Being, which is intended to establish the link between landscape architecture and its impact on public health and related issues. Note that the Board of Trustees is charged with approving the public policy statement, not the rationale. The proposed policy statement reads as follows:

*The American Society of Landscape Architects believes that the planning and design of our communities and landscapes have a significant impact on human health and well-being. These actions can enhance physical and mental health by promoting active lifestyles, mitigating the impacts of environmental stressors such as air pollution and heat, and providing a diversity of public spaces that foster social interaction and contact with nature.*

*ASLA advocates for individuals and community leaders to incorporate the best practices and knowledge from both the design and health fields with the goal of improving human health and well-being through sound and creative planning, design, and management of our communities and built environment. ASLA urges the employment of a broad range of policies, practices, and development incentives that will encourage the creation of communities that are safe, affordable, lively and healthy. ASLA encourages increased research and collaboration between the design professions and health professions to advance our understanding and ability to create environments that enhance human health and well-being.*

**Board Action:** Motion to approve the proposed new Human Health and Well-being policy statement as recommended by the Policy Committee. Board voted to approve Motion unanimously.

## 6. Ethics Code Amendment –

*Presented by Curt Millay, ASLA Corporate Secretary*

To clarify the procedures regarding third parties and confidentiality, the Ethics Committee recommends revisions to the Rules of Procedure for Filing and Resolution of a Complaint.

**Board Action:** The proposed language by the committee to clarify the language was approved unanimously.

## 7. Mission and Value Statement –

*Presented by Nancy Sommerville, Executive Vice President*

Last year, ASLA embarked on the process of using the Baldrige criteria<sup>1</sup> as a tool for enhancing ASLA's overall effectiveness, beginning with an organizational assessment, building on and going beyond the program and priorities review completed annually at midyear. The Baldrige criteria and several Baldrige-based assessment tools are being used for this process.

Defining the mission, vision, values, and organizational culture are all fundamental parts of the Baldrige approach. The mission, vision, values, and culture (MVVC) should collectively guide both the "what" and the "how" of an organization's programs. Although ASLA has had a mission statement, a vision statement and organizational values and culture had not yet been defined. Accordingly, ASLA began looking at all of these last year, and seeking input from the Board, Executive Committee, and staff to guide the discussion.

1. Approve the following as the vision statement of the American Society of Landscape Architects:

***Leading the design and stewardship of land and communities.***

2. Approve the following as the mission statement of the American Society of Landscape Architects:

***Landscape architects lead the stewardship, planning, and design of our built and natural environments.***

***The Society's mission is to advance landscape architecture through advocacy, communication, education, and fellowship.***

**Board Action:** The proposed new Vision Statement and Mission Statement for ASLA was approved unanimously.

## 8. Mortgage and Long-term Reserves Transfer–

*Presented by President Tavella, FASLA*

Acting upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee, and as presented earlier in the BOT meeting by CFO Michael O'Brien, there was a motion to approve the liquidation of \$2M funds from the long-term reserve funds to be made available to pay off the ASLA headquarters mortgage. Michael shall work with the funds investment advisor regarding strategies to complete this prior to the end of 2013 in order to capitalize on stock market gains and current interest rates.

**Board Action:** The proposed motion to move the funds from the reserve fund to be made available to pay off the mortgage in June 2014 was approved unanimously.

## 9. Climate Change Forum –

*Presented by Julia Lent, Director, Government Affairs & Bradford McKee, LAM Editor & Chief*



- A recent *LAM* reader survey found that climate change was most identified as the critical issue facing the profession. After receiving several messages from members concerned that ASLA was advocating on climate change issues, the federal advocacy priority survey of members included a question asking, “It is important for ASLA to demonstrate to lawmakers how landscape architects can contribute to reducing greenhouse gases and mitigating the effects of climate change.” More than half of respondents strongly agreed with this statement and 82 percent agreed or strongly agreed (less than 8 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed).
- ASLA is hosting an open forum at the ASLA Annual Meeting on the issues related to climate change and landscape architecture, looking to highlight the ASLA resources and advocacy efforts surrounding this issue and giving members the opportunity to discuss how landscape architects are working to design resilient communities to mitigate the effects of climate change.

**Board Action:** No action was requested by the Board.

## 10. LAM Report –

*Presented by Bradford McKee, LAM Editor & Chief*

- In the three years since its centenary in 2010, *Landscape Architecture Magazine* has made significant strides toward becoming a more engaging and informative magazine for readers and a more competitive one among its peer publications in the design and construction industry. In the process, it has strengthened its ability to serve in its vital support role within ASLA in terms of visibility and healthy advertising, not least during a time of serious contraction (and closure) among other design magazines. A complete redesign that launched at the beginning of 2011 was accompanied by a reprogramming of the content toward more serious and wide-ranging topical coverage, deeper and more enterprising reporting, better writing, and consistently excellent photography and graphics. The response by readers and advertisers has been overwhelmingly positive both in surveys and anecdotally.
- As these changes took shape, the magazine had no real online presence, which held it back from the explosive growth in the conversation about design, sustainability, and urbanism on the web. In April 2012, the magazine launched a new blog ([www.landscapearchitecturemagazine.org](http://www.landscapearchitecturemagazine.org)) with the express goal of engaging readers far more often than monthly and, indeed, attracting new readers worldwide daily—a typical day now brings 1,300 views to the magazine’s web site.
- Coming out of the recession, advertising sales of the magazine have been robust, with an all-time record year for ad sales in 2012 of \$2.8 million. This has been welcome news for ASLA, particularly as membership numbers have been slow to rebound from recession-era losses. The result is a magazine that is at least 20 percent larger, in terms of total page counts, in 2012 and 2013 than it was during 2006, the peak year before the recession began. As advertising pages increase in number, so must editorial pages, in accordance with the Board-approved editorial policies of 2009, which state that the magazine should maintain a ratio of 55 percent editorial content to 45 percent advertising. A budget increase in 2012 gave the magazine better ability to contract outside writers for expanded coverage. The staff size has remained at five people, two fewer than in 2006. An additional staff position is budgeted for 2014; that position will be dedicated in part to developing a new e-newsletter that will arrive to readers twice weekly. The magazine also is making it a priority in 2014 to incorporate continuing education content into the editorial mix.

**Board Action:** No action

## 6. ASLA Fund –

*Presented by Susan Hatchell, FASLA Immediate Past President*

- At its annual meeting each year, the Board of Directors elects its successors to hold office for a term of one year upon ratification by the Full Voting Members for the ASLA Fund, a 501c3 organization. (The Voting Members of the ASLA Fund are the BOT of ASLA). High priority programs for the ASLA Fund, which target special programs and can accept grant funding, include:
  - Sustainable Sites Initiative - ongoing
  - Headquarters Green Roof Research and Promotion – ongoing
  - Greenstreet Chinatown RFQ – released November 15, 2013. Grant request pending at National Endowment of the Arts for potential construction funding
  - Professional Honors & Awards Program
  - Library & Archives, Collect Prints and Drawings Collection – delayed due to lack of funding, approaching Council of Fellows regarding collaboration with the National Building Museum to store, scan and digitize collected materials and display selected items.

**Board Action:** Motion to approve the 2014 ASLA Fund Board of Directors. Board voted to approve Motion unanimously.

## 10. Open Forum Issue Discussion

Open Forum discussion issues –

- Clarification of requirements for faculty/staff participation in the Student ASLA Merit & Honor Awards
- Discussion of Board & Executive Committee communication
- Local chapter job postings & email alerts regarding level of appropriateness
- LandUp! Event that the Illinois Chapter hosted was brought to the attention of the Board
- What is the opportunity to provide SITES educational opportunities for CEU's

The meeting concluded with open forum discussion.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be conducted at the Mid-year Meeting, May 16-17, 2014 in Washington, D.C.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott L. Siefker, ASLA  
Indiana Chapter Trustee